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BY

A. MILLER

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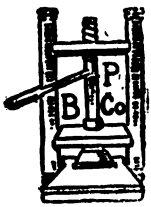
UNMORAL MAXIMS

BY ABRAHAM MILLER

Cover by Ernest Cook

Do I contradict myself? Very well,
then, I contradict myself!
—*Walt Whitman.*

Flout 'em and scout 'em, and scout
'em and flout 'em!
Thought is free.
—*The Tempest, Act 1, Scene 2.*



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About Women

What a woman cannot grasp instinctively she fears and suspects and can never understand.

Against a man morality-mad we have our fists for defense, but against a woman . . .

Beauty in woman is that potent alchemy which transforms men into asses.

When a woman wants to sin even the Decalogue is her refuge, the very Saints are her abettors.

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The woman who is indifferent towards me I dismiss with an audible scoff at her understanding.

Prudery is the respectable woman's way of obtruding her sexual desires.

Rob a woman of cunning and deceit and what remains is bare female.

A woman that speaks the truth finds no favor in my eyes, for she disturbs the pretty theories I cherish about her sex.

Woman's habitat is in the realm of commonplaces.

Friendship between two women is nothing more than a pledge to take each other seriously.

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Most cases of seduction are due to woman's willingness.

Woman is the only creature in nature that hunts down its hunters and devours the prey alive.

For women to be friends they must completely nullify their instincts.

A man or a woman without passions is like a windmill in a calm—motionless, ghastly, useless.

Feline, feminine: A quaint similarity of sound. Brutal the thought that suggests an analogy.

A beautiful woman chokes me with envy of the fool whose kennel she adorns.

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A passionless woman and a sinless man are equally intolerable.

A mirror is a glass held up to nature undeffled in a lady's bedroom; and to nature stifled, tortured, misshapen in the parlor.

A beautiful woman reconciles me to God—the witch.

Three-fourths of the wives in Christendom have in their hearts made cuckolds of their husbands on the very bridal couch.

Prudery casts secret glances at the open gate of the brothel.

Most women bestow their favors upon men, not from Passion, but from Compassion.

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On Men

We often credit a man with wickedness when his guilt is sheer nastiness.

There are people whose honesty is so obnoxious that one is provoked to bring them to judgment for it.

A man argues not from any desire to inform or to convince, but in obedience to some evil blind instinct that masters him completely.

The man who sins and then repents deserves a well-twisted rope at the gallows.

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Most men are unhappy by choice and to comfort them is to wrong them.

The prudent man lingers long on a woman's lips, but a fool is in haste to be going.

Few men know how to sin.

To most men the terms Love and Lust conjure up the very same emotional image.

Those who love their country never wish to rule it.

The pedant uses a sledge-hammer to kill a louse; the idealist tries to scale Heaven with a step-ladder.

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Without audacity a man may get along, but he must put to more work.

Men set upon pedestals get bruised in a fall.

A Patriot is one who loves his country's flag and robs his countrymen.

When a man has once gained a Reputation not even with God's help can he get rid of it.

A man cannot witness a sunrise and remain a scoundrel.

Most men look upon Nature as their enemy and in their hearts they hate it.

When habit clutches a man he becomes a limp mass of nerveless meat.

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The seeker of quarrels finds the whole world ready to indulge his humor.

Most men would gladly give their souls to the Devil, were he willing to accept them.

Many an Apollo Belvidere has but a poor donkey for his spiritual counterpart.

A man begins to die when he ceases to expect anything from To-morrow.

Few are fit to train monkeys, yet not one of us but thinks himself competent to bring up children.

A living carcass fretted with a thousand festering sores is not near so pitiable a sight as he who beckons pity.

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Not even the wisest amongst us can determine how much makes enough.

Until thirty we live through curiosity, after that out of sheer spite and bravado.

We complain of scandal for fear that it may pass unnoticed.

We never forgive a scandal-monger that passes our reputations by.

Those who canonize Turnips hold Lilies in contempt.

He who knows how to loaf is wiser than three sages.

A good man is one with sluggish blood in his veins.

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Habit is a great swamp wherein men are turned to fossils.

Few married men are active radicals; perhaps their instincts to complain are amply gratified at home.

He who sniffs must be ready for many an ill smell.

Men keep on the path of righteousness only because the road to the Devil is not yet paved.

Nothing smells ill to the man without nostrils.

Yesterday holds the aged man's exploits, to-morrow the sluggard's; the able man enacts his to-day.

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Marriage and Love

Marriage is a failure because it destroys temptation by denying the right to resist.

Marriage does not unite two people; it entangles them.

The present marriage laws are very propitious towards making Cuckoldom the normal state of men.

An old love episode is even less interesting than a last year's ledger.

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Alas! Romeo has detected a wart on Julia's nose: the Dogrose of Love is nipt in the bud.

When lovers catch cold it is Love's throat that's most sore.

The Fool

The angels tremble when a fool is in the right.

Men are born, fools are littered.

Even in Texas one cannot throw a stone without striking a fool.

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Even among fools there is professional jealousy.

When an ass brays he lifts his ears to find out what other asses think about it.

No lie is so gross that there is not somewhere a blind fool waiting for it with avid maw.

When a poor fool acquires riches he becomes a rich fool.

A pedigree extending from here to China cannot fill up an inch of vacuum in the brain.

Inanity in its fulness like genius is born with a man: however, it may be acquired to some extent in any first class University.

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A fool is a fool, but a blatant fool is a scoundrel.

Where are my friends? In the grave. I have bored them all to death.

When a fool dies there is much shedding of tears in the land whither he is bound.

In fooldom no man is better than his fellow.

No fool is a damned fool unless he is married.

Ten gods cannot change the opinion of one fool, especially if another fool agrees with him.

No man seeth the length of his own ears.

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If a successful man acts like a fool we say he is eccentric.

Bores are a race of mental eunuchs.

The Church and Religion

It is meet that men should sing hymns to their God. The departed hero deserves a requiem

---

Rum and Missionaries have done more than bullets to annihilate the American Indians.

The prevailing Christian precept: Make your neighbor turn the other cheek.

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Heaven is so uninviting a place that a monstrous pack of priests is needed to drive us into it.

The Church is a conspiracy to corrupt men's morals.

Great fear of Paradise will some day drive me to crime.

Heaven and Hell are man's hopes and his fears extended beyond the grave.

Many deeds are enacted in God's name which fill the Devil's heart with envy.

Conscience is extinct among us, but it is said to still linger among the more savage tribes of Africa: proof that there is a pressing need for more missionaries.

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I like that pathetic statement of a certain Frenchman: The Americans are a Christian nation, that is, they go to church on Sundays.

On Fifth Avenue, during the warm months, God like his neighbors boards up his city abode and retires to his summer home.

Listening to sermons is a gentle self-torture which a heavy conscience enjoins upon us.

It is said that the negro women in Africa preserve their chastity until they put on skirts and Christianity.

Prayer is the stimulant of the feeble.

A full-bred St. Bernard is more moral than a Clergyman.

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The State and Politics

The State is composite: part ass, part vulture, but principally milch-cow.

Diplomacy is the Hypocrisy of an entire nation made into a science.

We talk much of reform, meaning thereby a change of mud in our mud-bath.

The only way to reform a Politician is to hang him.

This talk of purifying Politics is dull and unprofitable. Do men talk of chastening the trade of the harlot?

The Politician—a slimy belly-creeper and lover of the mud.

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The Politician is a biped; but he is probably an aberrant form of hyena.

When a number of common blackguards combine their criminal experiences for the purpose of despoiling an asinine public they constitute a political body known as the State Legislature.

Men who find lock-breaking a risky trade turn to Politics.

Honesty is not a contagious disease and so the Church and the State need not adopt very stringent measures for crushing it.

The Church and the State—Consumption married to a Cancer. Who knows what foul offspring they may yet beget.

Suicide—the only offence against the Laws for which men cannot devise a punishment.

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Justice

Justice like the sunflower hangs its head on the sunny side.

Compromise is the respect Justice pays to Power.

Justice is a delicious morsel; to prevent satiety our judges wisely limit the output.

Justice like clouds and chameleons assumes shape and color to suit conditions.

Only mad men expect full Justice; the sane strive for a reasonable degree of Injustice.

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It harms no man to love Justice, for none expect him to espouse it.

If Judges continue their good work for another century not a tolerable man will be left out of prison.

This country is ruled by Judges; Judges are ruled by Precedents; Precedents are begotten by Prejudice.

Gentility

One who stultifies his own character in desperate attempts to please everybody is called a "Gentleman."

Scratch a "gentleman" and you find an imbecile.

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Strip a "Gentleman" of his respectability and you have either a clown or a blackguard.

Respectability is a stamp that passes many false coins.

Gentility is one form of hypocrisy.

When a wolf loses his character he becomes a dog; when a man loses his *he* becomes a "Gentleman."[2]

The Workman

The aristocracy has two ways of insulting the poor man; one is by its neglect, the other by its care.

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The workman is a vine that is crushed by the burden of its own clustered grapes.

Big fortunes are built of sliced layers of workmen's quivering meat.

Like bees that are drowned in the honey which they make the workmen are crushed by the wealth which they create.

Stupidity is the wet-nurse of the workman's ills.

A few more little victories and the workman will gain triumphantly the postern door of the poorhouse.

Poverty! one is almost tempted to bring the poor man to account for it.

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Geese are fatted for their livers, but what profit is there in feeding paupers.

The Jew

Men must kill—God made the Chase.
Men must rob—God invented Politics.
Men must hate—God created the Jew.

Jew-hating has become an exquisite universal pleasure, and it is very unreasonable for the Jew to object.

When a man says that he likes the Jews he merely means that he hates them mildly.

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Charity

In time Charity will make paupers of us all.

Charity debauches the giver and depraves the receiver.

Charity is the eldest born of Injustice.

Anonymous Charity is now as impossible as anonymous literature; men want full credit for what they do.

When Charity left the womb it was welcomed by the demoniacal cachinnation of a thousand devils.

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Charity to us is what indulgences were to the Catholics, the convenient means of expiating our sins.

The latter-day Samaritans first strip the workman of his raiment, pocket the texture, and then make him a library or a college of the buttons—with the inscription on the door, "None but the dressed may enter."

Vagaries

FOR RADICALS.

Revere no one;
Fear nothing;
Venture much;
Trust in the Devil.

Spring is the rutting season of mankind.

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Kindness is a distemper which is soon cured by experience.

Advertising is immodesty turned to profit.

Every Frenchman triumphed at Austerlitz, but Napoleon only was defeated at Waterloo.

If a single issue of the Sunday paper failed to appear, Indignation would shake every house from Sandy Hook to the Golden Gate.

Success may dance a jig at vespers and the congregation will solemnly cry "Amen!"

The City—the domain of perpetual headaches.

The one who condemns my actions I sincerely pity for his lack of appreciation.

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It grieves me sore that the Devil is niggardly with his Temptations.

German wit is so very German that to understand it one must swear allegiance to the Kaiser.

I rail at you not through envy nor for your salvation—I rail because it pleases me to rail.

I must claim Fortune is a perverse hag until she kisses me upon the lips.

Sobriety is the unique virtue of asses and of molluscs.

The Orang-utan is a conservative. He is still an ape.

Sensuousness is a test of health.

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A broken rule is a step Heavenward.

If argument fail—try banter.

I cannot understand how the sun can rise and set without my leave.

A tear unshed and a laugh unlaughed are promises to oneself—unkept.

If I help to kill old Prejudices it is only because I love dearly the ceremony that attends their burial.

If your fathers had had their will we should be swinging by our tails in the jungles of Africa.

I will be honest if only to differ from my neighbors.

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Were I forced to forego dreaming God knows what I should do.

The soul finds more delight in one enemy than in a multitude of friends.

I call that man intelligent who readily responds to my desires.

Spring is the storm and stress period of the year, when everyone's feelings are in market-day confusion, and when a man may be forgiven a few temporary aberrations of the heart.

When I find that people agree with me, I promptly change my opinions.

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Mixed Maxims

Rob me of my coat, deprive me of my only meal, spit in my face, but in the name of Justice let me go my own way.

Feeling fills the granaries of our heart and thinking empties them.

Pity in its embrace strangles respect.

Remorse withers the succulent fruits of sin.

Not even the roar of a Lion can be heard above the howling of a thousand Dogs.

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Who made the laws against Sensuality? The senile, the emasculated. In vain doth the Gelding make laws for the Stallion to obey.

A grain of venom stirred well in a gallon of good-will makes the only reliable literary concoction for curing a social disease.

Civilization helps the disabled and disables those who can help themselves.

"Everything must end." This is the evil within every joy and the joy within every evil.

The Fanaticism which meets with our approval we graciously term Enthusiasm.

Gentleness in a toothless dog is a lean virtue.

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The art of Silence is rapidly becoming traditional. It is dying with the American aborigine.

Protracted optimism must eventually end in hopeless fatuity.

Success will get an ear even to vomit into.

The stench of putrefying souls passes more freely through renaissance laces than through rags.

Wisdom teaches us to live content upon a bone gnawed bare—a fiend's lesson.

Cant, formerly the birthright of the Clergy, has now, thank God, become our common heritage.

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Commercialism stultifies the better parts of a man's nature and leaves him as destitute of ideals as an oyster.

Nature talks in symbols; he who lacks imagination cannot understand her.

Society's partiality for informal "events" is a tacit admission that even they cherish a vague yearning for life—free and unconventional.

Past pleasures are of as little comfort to a man as the money in his neighbor's pocket.

No lion ever went mouse-hunting.

The Family is an absolute monarchy in miniature.

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Pregnant To-morrow, impregnable To-morrow! Holds imprisoned in her belly the hopes and fears of a pale-faced humanity.

The earth is much over-populated, hence that abominable institution called "Society."

A desire scorned and neglected is an enemy lying in wait with bared dagger.

Our Desires snort and press forward like giddy stallions, but our Means creep sullkily along like snails.

Strife holds within its womb the embryos of colossal ecstasies.

More fair names have been reduced to ashes and dust by inept apologies than by inept deeds.

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Obey—makes curs of wolves and varlets of men.

Clubdom—Inanity with a local habitation and a name.

Poverty drives Generosity from the door with a whip, affluence with a cudgel.

A bequest is a sarcastic tribute paid to generosity.

Hatred is exasperated envy.

Mediocrity is the marshy border line separating greatness from littleness: a fit habitation for human mosquitoes.

Our hopes realized, our glory consummated, our strife rewarded:—shrouds, a coffin, six feet of earth.

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Humility is disguised Cowardice.

Children are a comfort to men because the youngsters cannot contradict them.

Next to Injustice, Vulgarity is the grossest crime in nature.

Laziness prevents more crimes than morality.

Nothing is sublime under knife and microscope.

Repetition is the distinguishing quality of a great teacher; it is also an unfailing symptom of approaching imbecility.

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In Literature the lack of humor is sadly great. The world embodies all its humor in the inscriptions on the tombstones. The Epitaph is the last great joke that we play upon our fellows. It is, too, the consummation of all our baseness; in it we lie to the very sod.

Brutality is Stupidity in action.

There is nothing we abhor so much as to have to be virtuous in private.

Undertakings with means unfit must fail. You cannot strike fire by rubbing your nose.

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